Liberty

NOT THE DAUGHTER BUT THE MOTHER OF ORDER — PROUDHON

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"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

On Picket Duty.

To my criticism that 'John Swinton's Paper" lacks a "definite and scientific grasp of the principles of Liberty and Equity," the editor answers: "Oh, for the scientific grasp!" It is not to be had by ejaculation, Mr. Swinton; only by thought and study. In this exclamation is strikingly exhibited the very fault that I find in all your agitation, — that it is ejaculatory instead of articulate.

It is pleasant to be able to announce the reappearance of the Spanish Anarchistic journal, the "Revista Social." My best wishes for its uninterrupted success, as well as for that of "L'Intransigente," an Italian organ of Anarchistic principles recently started at Venice. The evidences of the spread of Anarchism in all directions are accumulating with a rapidity that makes the most sanguine of us wonder.

A letter recently received from John F. Kelly of Hoboken contains the following interesting bit of information: "One of my Irish correspondents, Hickey of Brosna, writes me that a marriage was celebrated recently in his parish without the presence of any official either of Church or State. You can scarcely realize what an immense advance in opinion such an act indicates, taking place in a small Irish mountain village at a distance from any large town."

"The whole theory of murder as a means of reform and progress, which Wendell Phillips once dishonored himself by approving, and which an unworthy son of New Bedford has recently disgraced himself by upholding in all its naked deformity, is a terrible mistake." The newspaper that lately made the foregoing remark was the New Bedford "Standard," and the "unworthy son" referred to is myself. The disgrace of having my name associated with that of Wendell Phillips against New Bedford and its journalistic dullards is one that I can stand as long as they can. "If this state of things [dynamite warfare] is to continue," says the "Standard," "society will be reduced to the condition we read of in Jewish history, when every man did that which seemed right in his own eyes, and will be reduced to the semi-barbarous condition of those ancient times." What a horrible condition of affairs it must have been when every man was honest enough to obey his own conscience, — that is, to do "that which seemed right in his own eyes"! In whose eyes, pray, if not his own, ought a man's conduct to seem right? The idea that a man should do only that which seems right in other eyes is not only rottenly dishonest, but tends straight to the communism which the "Standard" professes to abhor, and which was the prevailing form of society, not in semi-barbarous, but in wholly barbarous times. "Modern society," the "Standard" concludes, "cannot and will not endure this, and must find a way to prevent it." Exactly Liberty's opinion; but what is the "Standard" doing toward the discovery of this way? Nothing but denouncing as cranks those who are earnestly striving to find it. It requires the bursting of a dynamite bomb under their noses to arouse these country journalists from their sapient lethargy.

One with Dynamite is a majority, — if there is an idea behind the dynamite.

G. P. Putnam's Sons are about to publish a small work, entitled "Man's Birthright; or, The Higher Law of Property," by Edward H. G. Clark, of Troy, N. Y. Mr. Clark is a strong writer, and his book will doubtless be interesting.

I will give ten cents each for copies of the following numbers of Liberty: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 12, 15, 16, 19, 22, 24, 26, and 48. If every reader of Liberty who has back numbers to spare will look them over for the desired dates and send them to me on the above terms, a great favor will be conferred.

The Truth Seeker Company sends me its "Annual and Freethinkers' Almanac" for 1885, a large and handsome pamphlet containing interesting articles by and in some cases excellent portraits of eminent Liberals. These portraits are grouped, six on a page. On the fifth plate appears John R. Kelso surrounded by five well-known ladies. Will not the gallant Colonel take this as a hit at his recent vigorous articles in behalf of the rights of Mormons? The book is worth its price, — twenty-five cents, — and worthy of its enterprising publishers.

Liberty deeply regrets the loss of a friend and subscriber in the death of John S. Verity of Lynn. He was one of the best and sincerest men in the Liberal ranks. Never did man love the truth better. Indeed, to this desire to be and do the right was due the chief weakness of his character, a certain instability of opinion, resulting from his giving too great weight to the last new argument for or against a given position. He was always afraid lest he might do injustice to his opponent's thought. But there was really no disposition to waver, and after one of these conflicts he always found himself nearer to the position of perfect liberty. So it was that, beginning by advocating compulsory methods of reform, the end of his life saw him sufficiently Anarchistic to accept the principles urged in Auberon Herbert's "A Politician in Sight of Haven," and so it is that Liberty mourns his disappearance.

Congress was recently on the point of reducing the rate of postage on newspapers to publishers from two cents to one cent a pound. This is as absurd as it is unjust. Being a publisher myself, of course I am very happy to be able to send a single copy of Liberty to San Francisco and have it delivered by carrier to a street and number for one-eighth of a cent, as I can do now, and my happiness is likely to become rapturous when congress shall enable me to do the same thing for one-sixteenth of a cent. But as it costs the government almost if not quite as much to carry and deliver newspapers as letters, I am unable to see why my neighbor, who is not a publisher, should be taxed two cents for the transportation of his letter to San Francisco in order that my newspaper may go for very much less than cost. In fact, such an adjustment of rates is compulsory communism, or, in other words, robbery, and I am surprised to see so stanch a defender of individualism as the Galveston "News" uphold it. Every article carried in the mails should be carried for what it costs to carry it, and competition would compel this if the real and bottom outrage in the matter, the government monopoly of the postal business, were abolished.

Stepniak's thrilling revolutionary sketch, "A Female Nihilist," which was finished in the last number of Liberty, is now ready in pamphlet form at ten cents a copy. The author, whose work on "Underground Russia" has had such a large sale on both sides of the Atlantic, is a Nihilist himself and thoroughly conversant with the men and measures of his party. The sketch now published is of a typical Nihilistic heroine, and all should read it who wish to know the stuff of which Russian revolutionists are made.

The somewhat fitful intervals at which Liberty has lately appeared are not to be continued long. This journal is now to have its own printing office, whereby much expense will be saved and greater regularity of publication insured. The new type in which the next number is to be clothed will also enhance its beauty. It will appear March 21, after which the regular fortnightly publication will be maintained. By this important change not alone the paper will profit, but my facilities for pamphlet and book work will be greatly increased.

"'The one thing most wanted in the world,' according to Anarchist Benj. R. Tucker, of Boston, 'is to make capital want labor more than labor wants capital.' He thinks 'free banking' will accomplish this and that 'therein lies the solution of the labor problem.' By free banking we believe Mr. Tucker means that every man who has credit shall be privileged to coin it and pass it off as money if he can. As a method of creating anarchy this would without doubt be a success, limited only by the possibly unimportant fact that such a currency wouldn't circulate."— *Winsted Press.* May I suggest to Greenbacker Lucien V. Pinney, of Winsted, that it is none of his business whether such currency would circulate or not; that in any event he need not take it unless he chooses to; that those who wish to take it have a perfect right to do so; and that he and his Greenback companions, who belie their assertion that such currency would not circulate by proposing to provide legal penalties against its circulation, are evaders of logic and invaders of right.

Of the many new French publications of a socialistic nature that have recently come to Liberty's table, decidedly the best are "Le Glaneur Anarchiste" (The Anarchistic Gleaner) and "La Société Nouvelle" (The New Society). The former is published at Paris every month, and its contents entirely consist, as its name indicates, of extracts from the works of the most famous authors inculcating doctrines unmistakably Anarchistic. This important method of propagandism is one to which Liberty has contributed in publishing Burke's "Vindication of Natural Society," finished in this number and to appear before long in pamphlet form, and I suggest to my Paris contemporary that it would do well to translate this remarkable essay into French and publish it serially. "La Société Nouvelle" flies the flag of no special doctrine, but is really what it claims to be, — a free parliament for the discussion of social questions. It gives evidence of lofty tone and earnest purpose, and externally is the handsomest Socialistic magazine published. The early numbers have contained some powerful articles by those eminent scientists and socialists, Elisée Reclus and his brother Élie.

WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

A ROMANCE.

By N. G. TCHERNYCHEWSKY.
Translated by Benj. R. Tucker.

Continued from No. 58.

A special entiment can be stifled, and in the course of time my tranquillity will be reëstablished, and I shall once more be contented with my life. But if I once act against my human nature, I shall lose forever the possibility of tranquillity, the possibility of being contented with myself, and poison my whole life. This, in a word, is the situation in which I find myself: I like wine, and I see before me a cup of very good wine, but I have a suspicion that this wine is poisoned. Whether or not there is any ground for my suspicion it is impossible for me to know. Shall I drink this cup, or overturn it that it may not tempt me? I should not characterize my decision as noble or honest even; those are too high-sounding words; it is at most a matter of reason, of enlightened self-interest; I overturn the cup. Thereby I deprive myself of a certain pleasure, I cause myself a certain pain; but on the other hand I assure myself health, — that is, the possibility of drinking for many years and in sufficient quantities wine which, I feel sure, is not poisoned. I do not act stupidly; that is my only merit."

XVIII.

But how to retire? To play the old comedy over again, to feign offence, to show a base side to his character in order to explain his course, — that would not do; one cannot mislead twice in the same way; a second affair of the same sort would only have explained the real meaning of the first, and set Kirsanoff up as a hero not only of the new occasion, but of the old as well. In general any abrupt suspension of relations should be avoided; not that such a separation would not have been easier, but it would have excited attention, — that is, would have been a low and base thing (according to the egoistic theory of Kirsanoff). Therefore there was but one way left, the most difficult and painful, — to beat a retreat in a slow, imperceptible way, so that his departure should not be noticed. It was a delicate and sufficiently trying task; to go away without attracting the attention of one whose eyes are ever upon you is difficult. But, whether he would or no, this was what he had to do. However, according to Kirsanoff's theory, this course was not only not painful, but really agreeable; the more difficult an affair is, the more one rejoices (through pride) in his power and skill, if he executes it well.

And indeed he did execute it well: neither by a word, nor by ill-timed silence, nor by a look did he betray himself; he still maintained his ease of manner, and jested as before with Véra Pavlovna; it was evident that as before he found pleasure in her society; but obstacles were always arising to prevent him from coming to see the Lopoukhoffs as often as he used to, and from staying all the evening, so that Lopoukhoff had occasion oftener than before to seize him by the hand or else by the lappel of his coat and say to him:

"No, dear friend, I will not let you leave this discussion in that way." And so it was that while at the Lopoukhoffs' he always sat nearer his comrade's divan. All this was arranged so methodically that the change was not even perceptible.

Kirsanoff had obstacles, but he did not put them forward; on the contrary, he expressed regrets (rarely, for to express them too often would not have been proper) that these obstacles should present themselves. And these obstacles were so natural, so inevitable, that very often the Lopoukhoffs themselves drove him away by reminding him that he had forgotten his promise to be at home that evening, that such or such a one was waiting for him there, or that he forgot that if he did not go that day to see such a person that person would be offended, or that he forgot that he had at least four hours' work to do before the next morning; had he no desire to sleep at night? It was already ten o'clock; a truce to babbling! it was time to go to work. Thus they refreshed Kirsanoff's memory, but he did not always listen. He did not go to see this or that acquaintance; he might take offence if he liked. The work could wait; there was time enough, and he desired to stay the evening through. But the obstacles continually multiplied, and scientific pursuits pressed ever faster upon him and took away his evenings one after another. "May the devil take the scientific pursuits," sometimes he would cry. He met a steadily increasing number of individuals who threw their acquaintance at his head. The ease with which these individuals made his acquaintance was really astonishing, he would sometimes remark incidentally. It seemed so to him, but the Lopoukhoffs saw clearly that he was making a reputation and that for that reason an ever growing number of men needed him. He must not neglect them, and it was wrong to let himself go on like that. What was to be done? He had grown very lazy during the last few months, and could not set himself to work. "But you must, my dear Alexander;" "It is time, Alexander Matvéitch," they often said to him. It was a difficult manœuvre. Through long weeks he had to drag this deception and execute it with the slowness and precision of a clock-hand, which you cannot see move however attentively you look at it, but which nevertheless does its work, stealthily, and moves farther and farther from its primitive position. What pleasure, therefore, Kirsanoff the theorist found in the contemplation of his practical skill! The egoists and materialists do nothing except for their own pleasure. Kirsanoff too could say, with his hand upon his conscience, that he was acting for his own pleasure, and rejoiced at his skill and decision.

A month passed in this way, and if any one had examined things, he would have found that in the course of this month Kirsanoff's intimacy with the Lopoukhoffs had grown no less, but that the time he spent with them had become four times less, and the part of the time spent with Véra Pavlovna had diminished one-half. A month more and, while the friendship will remain the same, the interviews will be few and far between and the movement will be finished.

Does the clear-sighted Lopoukhoff notice nothing?

No, nothing at all.

And Véra Pavlovna? Does she notice nothing either? Not when herself. But here she has a dream.

XIX.

VÉRA PAVLOVNA'S THIRD DREAM.

This was Véra Pavlovna's dream:

After having taken tea and talked with her "darling," she went to her room and lay down all dressed for a moment, not to sleep, — it was too early, being only half-past eight, — but only to read. There she is, on her bed, reading. But the book falls from her hands. She reflects and says to herself: Why does *ennui* sometimes come over me of late, or rather, not *ennui*, but something like it? It simply occurred to me that I wanted to go to the opera this evening. But this Kirsanoff is so inattentive! He went too late to get the tickets. He ought to know, however, that, when Bosio sings, tickets are not to be had at eleven o'clock for two roubles each. Can Kirsanoff be blamed? If he had had to work until five o'clock, I am sure he would not have admitted it. But it is his fault just the same. No, in future I will rather ask my "darling" to get the tickets, and I will go with him to the opera: my "darling" will not leave me without tickets, and, as for accompanying me, he will be always very happy to; he is so agreeable, my "darling" Now, thanks to this Kirsanoff, I have missed "La Traviata;" it's horrid! I would have gone to the opera every evening, if there had been an opera every evening, however bad the piece, provided Bosio filled the principal rôle. If I had a voice like Bosio's, I would sing all day. If I could make her acquaintance? How can I do it? That artillery officer knows Tamberlik well, cannot he be secured as a mediator? It is not possible. But what a queer idea! Of what use to make Bosio's acquaintance? Would she sing for me? Must she not look out for her voice?

But when did Bosio get time to learn Russian? And to pronounce it so well? Where did she unearth those verses that are so licentious? She probably studied Russian with the same grammar that I used: those verses are quoted in it as an example of punctuation, which is very stupid. If only those verses were not so licentious; but there is no time to think of the words, for one has to listen to her voice.

Consacre à l'amour
Ton heureuse jeunesse,
Et cherche nuit et jour
L'heure de l'ivresse.*

How queer these words are! But what a voice and what sentiment! Yes, her voice is much improved; it is admirable now. How did Bosio succeed in reaching such a point? I did not know how to make her acquaintance, and here she is, come to make me a visit. How did she learn of my desire?

"You have been summoning me a long time," said Bosio, in Russian.

"I? How could I have done so, when I am unknown to you? No matter, I am glad, very glad, to see you."

Véra Pavlovna opens her curtains to extend her hand to Bosio, but the singer begins to laugh; it is not Bosio, but rather De-Merick playing the Bohemian in "Rigoletto." But if the gay laugh is De-Merick's, the voice is really Bosio's; she draws back abruptly and hides behind the curtain. What a pity!

"Do you know why I have come?" said the apparition, laughing as though she were De-Merick instead of Bosio.

"But who are you? You are not De-Merick?"

"No."

"Then you are Bosio?"

Fresh laughter. "You recognize quickly, but we must now attend to the business on which I have come. I wish to read your diary with you."

"I have no diary; I never kept any."

"But look! what is that on the little table?"

Véra Pavlovna looks: on the little table near the bed lies a writing-book inscribed: *Diary of V. L.* Where did this writing-book come from? Véra Pavlovna takes it, opens it, — it is written in her hand: but when?

"Read the last page," says Bosio.

Véra Pavlovna reads: "Again it happens that I remain alone entire evenings. But that is nothing: I am used to it."

"Is that all?" says Bosio.

"All."

"No, you do not read all. You cannot deceive me. And what is this here?"

Véra Pavlovna sees a hand stretch forth. How beautiful this hand is! No, this marvellous hand is not Bosio's. And how did it pierce the curtains without opening them? The hand touches the page; at its contact new lines stand out which were not there before.

"Read."

Véra Pavlovna feels a pressure on her heart; she has not yet looked at these lines; she does not know what they contain, and nevertheless her heart is oppressed. She does not wish to read.

"Read," repeats the apparition.

Véra Pavlovna reads: "No, now I grow weary in my solitude. Formerly I did not grow weary. Why did I not grow weary before, and why do I grow weary now?"

"Turn one page back."

Véra Pavlovna turns the leaf: "Summer of this year" (who is it that writes her diary in this way? says Véra Pavlovna; it should have said 1855, June or July, with the date). "Summer of this year. We are going, as usual, out of the city to the islands. This time my darling accompanies us; how contented I am!" (Ah! it is August. What day of the month, — the fifteenth or the twelfth? Yes, yes, about the fifteenth; it was after this excursion that my poor darling fell sick, thinks Véra Pavlovna.)

"Is that all?"

"All."

"No, you do not read all. And what is this here?" (And the marvellous hand again stretches forth, and more new lines appear.)

Véra Pavlovna reads without wishing to: "Why does not my darling accompany us oftener?"

"Turn another leaf."

"My darling is so busy, and it is always for me, always for me that he works, my darling." (That is really the answer, thinks Véra Pavlovna with joy.)

"Turn one page more."

"How honest and noble these students are, and how they esteem my darling! And I am gay in their company; with them I feel as if I were with brothers, quite at my ease."

"Is that all?"

"All."

"No, read farther" (and for the third time the hand stretches forth causing new lines to appear)

Véra Pavlovna reads unconsciously: "August 16" (that is, the day after the excursion to the islands; it did occur then on the fifteenth, thinks she). "On the excursion my darling talked the whole time with that Rakhmetoff, the rigorist, as they jokingly call him, and with his other comrades. He stayed with me scarcely a quarter of an hour." (That is not true; it was over half an hour; over half an hour, I am sure, thinks she, without counting the time when we sat side by side in the boat.) "August 17. Yesterday we had the students here all the evening;" (yes, it was the night before my darling fell sick). "My darling talked with them all the evening. Why does he devote so much time to them

* Rendered in English prose: Consecrate to love your happy youth, and seek night and day the hour of intoxication.

and so little to me? He does not work all the time. For that matter he says himself that without rest labor is impossible, that he rests a great deal, and that he reflects upon some special idea in order to rest himself; but why does he meditate alone, without me?"

"Turn another leaf."

"In July of this year we have had the students twice, as usual; I have played with them a great deal, I was so gay. Tomorrow or day after tomorrow they will come again, and again I shall be gay."

"Is that all?"

"All."

"No, read farther" (the hand reappeared, and new lines responded to its contact). Again Véra Pavlovna reads unconsciously:

"From the beginning of the year to the end of spring. Yes, formerly I was gay with these students, but I was gay and that was all. Now I often say to myself: These are children's games; they will probably seem amusing to me for a long time to come, and even when I shall be old. When I shall be no longer of an age to take part in them, I shall contemplate the games of youth and thus recall my childhood. But even now I look upon these students as younger brothers, and I should not like to transform myself forever into playful Vérotchka, since I desire to rest myself with serious thoughts and labor. I am already Véra Pavlovna to amuse myself as Vérotchka is pleasant from time to time, but not always. Véra Pavlovna would like distractions which would permit her to remain Véra Pavlovna. Distractions with her equals in development."

"Turn a few pages farther back."

"I went to Julie's to get her orders. She did not let us go away without breakfast; she ordered champagne, and made me take two glasses. We began to sing, run, shout, and wrestle. I was so gay! My darling looked at us and laughed."

"Is that quite all?" says the apparition, again stretching forth the hand, which always produces the same result,—the appearance of new lines.

Véra Pavlovna reads:

"My darling only looked and laughed. Why did he not play with us? It would have been even merrier. Would he have acted clumsily? Not at all. But it is his character. He confines himself to the avoidance of interference, he approves, rejoices, and that is all."

"Turn a page forward."

"This evening we went, my darling and I, for the first time since our marriage, to see my parents. It was so painful to me to see again this interior which oppressed and stifled me before my marriage. Oh, my darling! From what a hideous life he has delivered me! At night I had a horrible dream: I saw Mamma, who reproached me with being ungrateful; it seemed to me that that was the truth, and this conviction made me groan. My darling, hearing my groans, ran to my side; when he entered my room, I was singing (though still asleep); the presence of the fair one, whom I love so much, had soothed me. My darling wished to dress me. I was much abashed. But he is so reserved; he only kissed my shoulder."

"Is that really all that is written there? You cannot deceive me. Read." Again under the fatal hand other characters arise, and Véra Pavlovna reads them, still unconsciously:

"And as if that were offensive!"

"Turn a few pages back."

"Today I waited for my friend D. on the boulevard near the Pont Neuf: there lives the lady by whom I wished to be employed as a governess. But she would not give her consent. D. and I returned to the house very much worried. Going to my room before dinner, I had ample time to consider that it would be better to die than to live as I had lived. Suddenly at dinner D. said to me: 'Véra Pavlovna, let us drink to the health of my sweetheart and yours.' I could scarcely keep from weeping tears of joy before everybody for this unexpected deliverance. After dinner I talked a long time with D. as to the way we should live. How I love him: he enables me to leave my cellar."

"Read, read the whole."

"There is no more there."

"Look." (The hand stretches forth.)

"I do not wish to read," says Véra Pavlovna, seized with fright; she has not yet seen clearly what these new lines say, but she is already afraid.

"I command you: read!"

Véra Pavlovna reads:

"Do I really love him because he delivered me from my cellar? No, I love, not him, but my deliverance."

"Turn farther back; read the first page."

"Today, the anniversary of my birth, I for the first time talked with D., and formed an affection for him. I have never heard any one speak such noble and strengthening words. How he sympathizes with everything that is worthy, how he longs to aid all that calls for aid! How sure he is that the happiness of mankind is possible and must come some day; that wickedness and pain are not perpetual, and that a new and peaceful life is approaching, with ever hastening steps! How my heart beat with joy when I heard these things from a learned and serious man! They confirmed my own thoughts. How good he was when he spoke of us, poor women! Any woman would love such a man. How wise, noble, and good he is!"

"Exactly; turn again to the last page."

"But I have already read that page."

"No, that was not quite the last. Turn one leaf more."

"Read, read! Do you not see? So much is written there." And the contact of the hand calls forth lines which were not there at first.

Véra Pavlovna trembles:

"I do not wish to read; I cannot."

"I command you. You must."

"I am neither willing nor able."

"Well, I will read what you have written there. So listen: 'He has a noble soul, he is my liberator. But a noble character inspires esteem, confidence, a disposition to act in concert, friendship; the liberator is rewarded by gratitude, devotion, and that is all. His nature, perhaps, is more ardent than mine. His caresses are passionate. But he has another need; he needs a soft and slow caress; he needs to slumber peacefully in tender sentiment. Does he know all that? Are our natures, our needs, analogous? He is ready to die for me, and I for him. But is that enough? Does he live in the thought of me? Do I live in the thought of him? Do I love him as much as I need to love? In the first place, I do not feel this need of a soft and tender sentiment; no, my feeling towards him is not'" . . .

"I will hear no more," and Véra Pavlovna indignantly threw away the diary. "Wicked woman, why are you here? I did not call you; go away!"

The apparition laughs, but with a gentle and good laugh.

"No, you do not love him; these words are written with your own hand."

"Be accursed!" Véra Pavlovna awoke with this exclamation, and had no sooner regained possession of herself than she rose and ran.

"My darling, embrace me, protect me! I have had a frightful dream!" She presses herself against her husband. "My darling, caress me, be affectionate with me, protect me!"

"What is the matter, Vérotchka? You are trembling all over," said Lopoukhoff, as he embraced her. "Your cheeks are moist with tears, and your brow is covered with a cold sweat. You have walked in bare feet over the floor; let me kiss your feet to warm them."

"Yes, caress me, save me! I have had a horrible dream; I dreamed that I did not love you."

"But, dear friend, whom do you love, then, if not me? That is a very strange dream!"

"Yes, I love you; but caress me, embrace me! I love you, and you I wish to love."

She embraced him with intensity, she pressed her whole form against him, and, soothed by his caresses, she gently fell asleep in his embrace.

XX.

That morning Dmitry Serguéitch did not have to call his wife to take tea; she was there, pressing herself against him: she still slept; he looked at her and thought: "What is the matter with her? What has frightened her? What does this dream mean?"

"Stay here, Vérotchka, I am going to bring the tea; do not rise; my darling, I am going to bring the water for your toilet that you may not have to disturb yourself in order to wash."

"Yes, I will not rise, I will remain in bed a while longer, I am so comfortable here: how good you are, my darling, and how I love you! There! I have washed; now bring the tea; no, embrace me first."

And Véra Pavlovna held her husband a long time in her arms. "Ah, my darling, how strange I am! How I ran to your side! What will Macha think now? We will hide this from her. Bring me my clothes. Caress me, my darling, caress me; I wish to love you, I need to love! I wish to love you as I have not yet loved you!"

Véra Pavlovna's room remains empty. Véra Pavlovna conceals nothing more from Macha, and is completely established in her husband's room. "How tender he is! How affectionate he is, my darling! And I imagined that I did not love you! How strange I am!"

"Now that you are calm, tell me your dream of day before yesterday."

"Oh, that nonsense! I only saw, as I have already told you, that you were not very demonstrative. Now I am well contented. Why have we not lived in this way always? I should not have had the dream, which I do not like to recall."

"But had it not been for this dream, we should not be living as we are now living."

"True; I am very grateful to her, this bad woman: she is not bad, she is good."

"Who is 'she'? Besides the beauty of former days, have you still a new friend."

"Yes, still a new one. I saw a woman come to me with an enchanting voice, more so than Bosio's, and what hands! Oh, what admirable beauty! I only saw her hand; she hid herself behind the curtains; I dreamed that my bed (I have abandoned it because I had this dream there) had curtains and that the woman hid herself behind them; but what an admirable hand, my darling! and she sang of love and told me what love is; now I understand it. How stupid I was; I did not understand; I was only a little girl, a stupid little girl!"

"Everything in its time, my angel. As we lived before, it was love; as we live now, it is love: some need one, others the other; at first the former was sufficient for you; now you need the latter. You have become a woman, my dear friend, and that which you did not need at first has now become necessary to you."

Two weeks pass. Véra Pavlovna takes her ease. Now she stays in her room only when her husband is not at home or when he is at work; but no, even when he is at work, she stays in his study, except when Dmitry Serguéitch's task demands all his attention. But such tasks are rare, and very often scientific tasks are purely mechanical; so three-quarters of the time Lopoukhoff saw his wife by his side. They lacked but one thing; it was necessary to buy another divan, a little smaller than her husband's. This was done, and Véra Pavlovna took her ease after dinner on her little divan, contemplating her husband sitting before her.

"My dear friend, why do you kiss my hands? I do not like that."

"Truly? I had quite forgotten that I offend you; and besides, what does it matter, for I shall do it just the same."

"You deliver me for the second time, my darling: you have saved me from wicked people, you have saved me from myself! Caress me, my dear friend, caress me!"

A month passes. Véra Pavlovna still willingly takes her ease. He sits down beside her on the divan; she throws herself into his arms, but becomes pensive; he embraces her; she is still pensive, and her tears are ready to flow.

"Vérotchka, dear Vérotchka, why are you so pensive?"

Véra Pavlovna weeps and does not say a word. No, she weeps no more, she wipes away her tears.

"No, do not embrace me, my dear friend! That is enough. I thank you."

And she gives him a glance so soft and so sincere.

"I thank you; you are so good to me."

"'Good,' Vérotchka? What do you mean?"

"Good, yes, my dear friend, you are good!"

Two days passed. After dinner Véra Pavlovna, pensive, lay stretched upon her bed. Her husband was near her, held her in his arms, and seemed equally pensive.

"No, that is not it; that is lacking."

"How good he is, and how ungrateful I am!" thought Véra Pavlovna.

Such were their thoughts.

She said in a simple tone and without sadness:

"Go to your room, my dear friend; to work or to rest."

Continued on page 6.

Liberty.

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"A free man is one who enjoys the use of his reason and his faculties; who is neither blinded by passion, nor hindered or driven by oppression, nor deceived by erroneous opinions."—Proudhon.

At Last an Answer.

Liberty has repeatedly called in question the consistency of "Le Révolté's" Anarchism, but has always been unsuccessful in inducing that paper to assume the defensive against these criticisms. The last comment made in these columns, however, has brought an answer, such as it is. Here is "Le Révolté's" defence:

> Liberty of Boston, in its issue of January 3, reproaches "Le Révolté" for showing so much reserve in welcoming it among the number of Anarchistic journals, and finishes its little article by saying that it is now its turn to be reserved in the choice of its companions. It asks us how we can recommend the violent seizure of all wealth without thereby violating the Anarchistic principle of freedom of production and exchange. We answer by repeating what is said in every one of our articles, — that liberty of production implies liberty of consumption, and consequently the free resumption of the possession of the products of labor when these products have been stolen from the community. In our turn we ask Liberty how it can see "the solution of the social problem in free banking," as is declared in the third paragraph of its issue of January 3. That is an idea which eludes us.
>
> Meanwhile, we thank Liberty for all the criticisms that it may see fit to make upon us, and we will undertake, should occasion offer, to cordially return the same.

Certainly liberty of production implies liberty of consumption, but consumption only of one's own product, not of another's, unless another's shall become one's own by process of exchange uncontaminated by force or fraud. Otherwise, one man's liberty of consumption necessarily violates another's. Liberty is not liberty, unless it is enjoyed by all alike. As for resuming possession of products that have been stolen from the community, that is nonsense. Products can be rightfully possessed only by individuals and voluntary associations. The community, if it is anything, is a compulsory association, and can never possess anything except by the thief's title. Therefore nothing can be stolen from it. If "Le Révolté" means that nearly all existing titles are vicious and represent simply what idleness has filched from labor, I agree, and I should waste no tears were "Le Révolté" to succeed in wiping out these titles, though I do not see how that would help us to the discovery of true titles. But, as I read "Le Révolté," it will not be satisfied with this, but proposes to have the community stand guard over the sum total of wealth and prevent any individual laborer from using any of the land or capital to produce on his own account for purposes of exchange with others. Does "Le Révolté" mean this, or does it not? If it does not, let it say so clearly. If it does, then it has no claim to be ranked as an Anarchistic journal, for it squarely denies individual liberty.

Until met here, I decline to be drawn upon any other ground. I charge "Le Révolté" with violating Anarchistic principles, and this charge is the first point to be settled. "Le Révolté" may hold the opinion that I overrate the importance of free banking, but it certainly cannot charge that, in advocating it, I am going counter to Anarchy. Show me first, my Swiss comrade, that you believe in real and not a counterfeit Anarchy; then I will put you in a way to see that the road to its realization is through free banking. T.

P. S. — At the last moment I learn that "Le Révolté" will be unable to pursue this discussion in consequence of a seizure of its office. This shameful offence against a free press, committed by the Swiss authorities, commands, of course, my most earnest condemnation and regret. T.

Dynamite, the New Apostle of Liberty.

The recent explosions in London carry with them a lesson which cannot be too much emphasized by the friends of Liberty. Thanks to the terrors of dynamite, the potency of individual assertion as against collective assumption embodied in the State is of late receiving an impetus which well-nigh bodes an utter revolution in social life.

I hold that the taking of life, or any resort to violence which takes for granted the probable sacrifice of life, except on the ground of actual physical defence against assault, is morally indefensible. So sacred to me is the Individual and the soul of a human being that I could not justify the premeditated taking of life, even under the most unquestioned probability that thereby a far greater number of lives would be spared. The Individualist who once accedes to any limitation of the right of an Individual to life, outside of physical self-defence against the taking of one's own life, is trifling with the very base of his system and moving Stateward. To this extent I shall remain a peace man until convinced that the position is illogical.

But Liberty has little or nothing to do with the abstract moral question of the right to take life or the methods of taking it. It has essentially to do with *equal rights* in war as well as in peace. Its primary assertion is *that the Individual has just as good a right to take life as has the State.* This is no moral abstraction; it is a plain issue of fair play brought home to men of common sense who dare think and speak their convictions. It strikes the State dead at one blow when any considerable portion of society accedes to it. Not a few manly men and womanly women, extricating themselves from the cant and hypocrisy of goody-goody social custom, are already acceding to it. Every thunder of dynamite in answer to man-killing governments leaves clearer and clearer proof of it behind.

Mr. P. A. Collins of Boston, according to newspaper report, recently stumbled into a surprising fit of level sense, though suicidal to a professional lawyer and politician. When the interviewer's gush-bucket was brought to him after the recent explosions, he said essentially: "I know little of this matter; but I see before me two belligerent forces, each of which has declared war against the other. One belligerent party goes by the name of dynamiters; the other belligerent party goes by the name of England. Now, since everything is fair in war according to recognized social rule, I suppose that neither belligerent party permits the other to dictate how it shall carry on its war; therefore, on *their* principles I suppose the dynamiters are consistent."

"Belligerents!" cries the canting American sneeringly: "are this murderous crew, who sacrifice innocent women and children, belligerents?"

Belligerents! I answer emphatically: are this murderous crew called English statesmen, who are today sacrificing innocent women and children in Egypt by the thousands, belligerents? Are *these* belligerents, who for centuries have deliberately murdered by hunger and the sword millions of innocent women and children in Ireland, and blown rebels (revolting patriots) from the cannon's mouth in India? Is the respectability of a belligerent to be gauged by the number of innocents who have been sacrificed to his murderous maw? These are questions that cannot be brushed away by sickening cant and hypocritical feigning of horror, and honest men must answer them squarely.

To be a respectable belligerent the oppressed and hunted party of a handful must first make an open public show of its designs and its material of war. In other words, the omnipotent State must first call up the handful of dynamiters in review and recognize it as a respectable force worthy of its endorsement. Before David goes out to meet Goliah, he must first be recognized by a few other Goliahs in conspiracy with Goliah No. 1. Then he becomes respectable in the eyes of the American canter. Even a nest of skunks would know better than to walk into such a trap. To none but a moral dwarf and a stultified coward has the recognition of the dynamiters by the American Congress anything to do with their respectability as belligerents, or with the justice of their methods.

The heroic silence of Parnell and the manly expressions of Davitt, Egan, Boyle O'Reilly, Collins, and other respectable Irishmen, are to me most gratifying and significant signs of the times. Alas! with Wendell Phillips died the only American of prominence not utterly sunken in the low level of popular hypocrisy which pervades our national life. The American conscience is rarely robust enough to get out from under the almighty dollar in the face of popularity and respectability and sound a manly word for Liberty and equal rights. But even here in this land of the free and home of the brave the popular conscience will yet get waked up, for sure as fate, whether we will or will not, dynamite has come among tyrants to stay. X.

The Death of Chinese Gordon.

The New York "Evening Post" of February 11, writing of the death of Gordon, says:

> Of the effect of his death on the war there is little doubt. It, of course, makes the capture of Khartoum and slaughter of thousands of Arabs certain. Hecatombs of these poor savages will be sacrificed to Gordon's memory, and yet they are probably engaged, as Mr. Gladstone has acknowledged, in as good a cause as any in which men have ever drawn the sword. They are struggling to be free, after long and patient endurance of shameful oppression.

And yet, neither the "Evening Post," nor the press of this country generally, nor the stinking political hypocrites in Congress, like Bayard, Hoar, Edmunds, Hawley, etc., have uttered one single anathema against the government that is carrying on this murderous war upon an innocent people. They have nothing to say in condemnation of the innumerable oppressions and crimes, which England, or any other so-called "civilized government," may choose to practise upon either their own, or any other, people. They look unmoved upon all these horrible oppressions and wrongs as occurring in the natural order of things; and as being all within the legitimate functions of those "civilized governments," with whom we have such "friendly relations," that we must never speak of the crimes they are committing against all weaker than themselves.

But when some one of the hundred millions, and more, on whom England is grinding her heel, attempts to blow up her parliament house, — the den in which she concocts all her crimes, — these putrid hypocrites and flunkies — editors, congressmen, and others — start up as if struck by an electric bolt, and exhaust all the epithets in the language, in trying to express their horror and detestation of such "wretches" and "fiends" as dare to raise their hands against a government, or defend themselves, in the only way left to them, against its oppressions.

These things show that our own government is made up of men who are at heart in sympathy with all the tyrannical governments that now curse the world. With them, governments are everything, human rights nothing. With them, a government is the very holy of holies, and any attack upon it, by its victims, is a sacrilege that words cannot describe.

Well, we have this comfort left us: Even such dry political bones as they are, have now shown that there is a power that can shock them into life; that can make them squeal with terror at what they see to be an attack upon their craft. Perhaps the next bolt may strike nearer home. If it should, it may teach them that they have no call to defend all the monstrosities in the world, that call themselves governments, and that make it their business to rob, enslave and murder mankind.

The time was when we proclaimed this country to be the home of the free, and an asylum for the oppressed. But that was when we were weak, and

wished to strengthen ourselves by the aid of those who should flee to us, and join their strength with ours against their oppressors. But now that we are strong, and have no longer any need of their aid, our sympathies have changed sides altogether. We do indeed permit the oppressed (or at least some of them, not the Chinese) to come to us; but they are welcome only upon the condition that they will, while here, say nothing of the tyrannies from which they have escaped, and do nothing for the oppressed they have left behind.

These things show what a great and glorious people we are! Who knows that we may not sometime become as great and glorious as England herself! or as Germany! or even Russia! and have our Gladstones, and Bismarcks, and Czars, and nihilists, and dynamiters, and all the other paraphernalia of "a first-class power."

His Holiness is Mournful.

The Pope addressed a delegation from Catholic societies recently, and impressed upon his hearers the necessity of guarding the masses against the insidious doctrines of socialism. The reports of this affair say: "The manner and utterances of his holiness were mournful." The task of guarding the masses against the insidious encroachments of knowledge grows more difficult every day. The printing press is doing its work in spite of Popes and Czars, and the masses are slowly disintegrating and discovering that they are composed of individuals, whose brains need no protection other than that supplied by nature. The classification of humanity under the two heads "rulers" and "the masses" is being rejected by the men who have been taught heretofore to regard themselves as a herd of working cattle; wherefore the rulers of Church and State wax mournful. The future indeed holds forth but scant promises to these mournful priests and kings. Their power is passing away, and when it shall have disappeared utterly from the planet, there will be "masses" no more; only men. K.

To Jog a Friend's Memory.

"I expect to see you favor voting next; why not one kind of force as well as another?" said a friend to me recently, one whose contributions have often strengthened and brightened these columns. He had been reading my defence of the dynamiters. Well, my friend, I accept your logic; and, if I could see that voting would break men's chains or even prevent an extra rivet calculated to make them last a century longer, I would vote without hesitation if other methods had become impracticable. The ballot and the bomb are both instruments of force, it is true, but I am ready to use force in self-defence when *forced* to it. When it comes to that, then the question to be considered is which force is the more forcible. And here there is everything in favor of the bomb. The ballot can and surely will be dodged by the oppressor, but there is no dodging the bomb. If my friend's remark means anything, it means that there is no difference between force used for oppression and force used for resistance, and that there are no circumstances which justify the latter. But, if that is what he means, he shall answer himself. Does he remember that he ever wrote something like the following?

> I do not forget the "philosophy of evolution" that will historically justify the pretensions of the Czar; but it will also justify the "Revolution," which cries, Down with him, and all the unjust ways and devices he upholds, in the name of *Providence!*
>
> I know a sentiment of this nature has an unpleasant sound to many good people, because it appears to sanction violence and bloodshed. But a previous question it were well to ask,—who is responsible for this disturbance of social peace? If it be seen that the government itself is the real invader,—the lawless party that robs and murders without restraint,—then the "Revolution" may assume the aspect of the party that is striving—not always wisely, perhaps, but striving after what sort it can—to protect society and insure domestic welfare and peace. I am certainly no advocate of war; but, if it must needs come, I can see that it is no more attractive, or deserving of apology, when instituted by despotic governments than when resorted to by oppressed people impatient for their liberties. My sympathies are assuredly with the latter. Mr. Seward used often to repeat that "under despotic governments the people must redress their grievances by the bayonet; under republics their reliance is on the ballot." Neither, in my judgment, are final, as nothing can be final that rests on *will*. Intelligent recognition and free acceptance of the right is the only finality. Until that time, men will bayonet and ballot, and the best one can say is, "May the best side win, be it 'established government' or Revolution!'" In Russia, success to "Revolution!"

And so I say: In Ireland, success to Revolution! That is all. My friend's sentiments are my own. I simply rejoiced when Revolution struck a telling blow. If he believes his old-time words, he must rejoice also. Wherefore, then, his hint that I am wavering in the faith? T.

The Shadow of the Revolution.

The spirit of discontent, of which the rapid growth of socialism is the more advanced symptom, is not confined to the few who really know what are the evils of the social organization and search intelligently for remedies, but crops out in all quarters and in ways that are significant, though often confused. Recently a Democratic organ in Lowell, laboring under the delusion that the tariff is the sole cause of hard times and poverty, declared that "we must have tariff reform or revolution" pretty soon. Not altogether a delusion is this party organ's notion, for the tariff is but the most palpable and conspicuous form of the governmental interference in the business of the people which is the fundamental evil of society. The tariff is the noxious growth from a poisonous root. It can be seen without effort, but only those who dig around it find the root. Yet it is something that political dupes see the necessity of extirpating the growth.

Another daily paper, commenting on a headline, "seven people held under the debris of the United States [hotel] at Washington" some time ago, said: "If public life at Washington does not become purer, it will not be long before the 'debris of the United States' will be all that is left of a once glorious republic. And instead of seven people, fifty millions will be held under the ruins till they free themselves by revolution."

The conviction that a revolution is imminent seems to be gaining ground, although there is only the vaguest kind of an idea of the probable direction of its impulse. The fact that so many persons are beginning to see, even in a dim, bewildered way that there ought to be a revolution, is an encouraging sign. The duty of Anarchists is to show them how the revolution can be brought about without violence, and to so guide the initial impetus that there shall be no recoil. K.

In the "Index" of January 29 B. F. Underwood said: "In despotic Russia, where men are under constant governmental surveillance and are deprived of freedom of speech and act, it does not so much surprise us to find dynamite resorted to as a terrorizing argument; but in a country so intellectually advanced and so politically free as England, it is difficult to imagine a set of beings so ignorantly brutal as to resort to such cruel and foolish methods of demanding that their grievances be adjusted." Of course, with England Mr. Underwood includes Ireland, else there is no point to his words; for the grievances are those of the Irish living under England's rule. It was my intention to show Mr. Underwood how groundless his distinction is, and that, since the policy of repressive legislation was initiated, it has been true of Ireland (to use Mr. Underwood's own words about Russia) that "the best men and women, those of genius and courage, are exiled and imprisoned, while the country is cursed by censorship of the press, suppression of freedom of speech, espionage, and a despotism pervading the government which paralyzes the mind and heart of the nation." Not to know this shows astonishing ignorance, especially in one who glibly charges ignorance of contemporary thought upon men so vastly his superiors in scholarship and mental grasp as Michael Bakounine and others like him. But it has become unnecessary to pursue the criticism that I had designed, since one of the editorial contributors to the "Index," Horace L. Traubel, has discussed the dynamite question in the issue of February 26 with a fairness, discrimination, and intelligence that refutes the position of his chief and ought to put him to the blush.

Commenting on a New Bedford workingman's assertion that he would be better off were he to give up his wage pittance at the mills and accept the city's charity, the Boston "Globe" urges newspapers to attend to the problem illustrated by this fact, and adds that, if Judge McCafferty, who had referred to the fact in his court, will help in the solution, the world will thank him. The "Globe" is mistaken. If Judge McCafferty ventures any assistance in that direction, the world will curse him, just as it has cursed and still curses all persons who seek to save it from its folly. Moreover, it may not stop with a curse; if his help proves too efficacious, it probably will hang him.

The parsons all over the country are getting very much excited over the success of the roller-skating rinks in their recently-inaugurated competition with the gospel-shops as places for making assignations. In this, as in all things, Liberty is against monopoly.

John Bright said: "There is no liberty where buying and selling are restricted." True; therefore there is no liberty in any "civilized" country on the face of the globe. Government control of money restricts buying and selling.

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WHAT'S TO BE DONE?

Continued from page 3.

"Why do you drive me away, Vérotchka? Am I not all right here?"

He was able to say these words, as he wished, in a simple and gay tone.

"No, go away, my dear friend. You do so much for me. Go and rest."

He embraced her, and she forgot her thoughts and breathed again quite freely and as if nothing saddened her.

"I thank you, my dear friend," she said.

And Kirsanoff is thoroughly happy. The struggle had been a little difficult to sustain; the greater therefore the internal contentment brought him by the triumph, a contentment which will last and warm his breast for a long time, throughout his life. He is honest. He has brought them nearer to each other. Yes, in fact, he has brought them together. Kirsanoff on his divan smoked and thought: "Be honest,—that is, calculating; make no mistake in the calculation; remember that the whole is greater than any of its parts,—that is, that your human nature is stronger and of more importance to you than any of your aspirations taken separately; place its interests, therefore, before the interests of any of your special aspirations, if they happen to be in contradiction; to put the whole in a simple definition: Be honest and all will go well. A single rule of great simplicity, but containing all the prescriptions of science, the whole code of happy life. Yes, happy those who have the power to understand this simple rule. For my part, I am happy enough in this respect. I undoubtedly owe much more to intellectual development than to nature. But in time this will become a general rule, inspired by education and surroundings. Yes, everybody will then live comfortably, as I do now, for instance. Yes, I am content. Nevertheless, I must go to see them; I have not been there for three weeks. It is time to go even though it were not agreeable. But would it not be better to postpone it a month? That is it. The retreat is executed; they will not notice now whether it has been three weeks or three months since I went to see them. It is very agreeable to think at a distance of men towards whom one has acted honestly. I rest on my laurels."

Three days later Lopoukhoff went into his wife's room after dinner, took his Vérotchka in his arms, and, carrying her to his room, placed her upon the little divan.

"Rest here, my friend," and he began to contemplate her. She went off into a doze, smiling; he sat down and began to read. She half opened her eyes and thought:

"How modestly his room is furnished! He has only the necessaries. No, he too has his whims. There is an enormous box of cigars, which I gave him last year; it is not yet exhausted. The cigar is his only whim, his only article of luxury. No, there is another article of luxury,—the photograph of that old man. What a noble face that old man has, what a mixture of goodness and perspicacity in those eyes, in the whole expression of the face! How much trouble Dmitry had in getting that photograph! Portraits of Owen are exceedingly rare. He wrote three letters; two of those who took these letters did not find the old man; the third found him and had to torment the old man a great deal in order to get a good photograph. And how happy Dmitry was when he received it with a letter from 'the sainted old man,' as he calls him, in which Owen praises me on the strength of what Dmitry has written him. And there is another article of luxury,—my portrait. For six months he economized in order to be able to employ a good painter. How they tormented me with that young painter! Two portraits, and that is all. To buy engravings and photographs like mine would not be so dear. He has no flowers either, and I have so many in my room. Why does he not want flowers, since I want them? Is it because I am a woman? What nonsense! Or is it because he is a serious and learned man? But there is Kirsanoff; he has engravings and flowers, although he too is a serious and learned man.

"And why does it weary him to devote much time to me?

"I know well that it costs him great effort. Is it because he is a serious and learned man?

"But there is Kirsanoff . . . No, no, he is good, very good, he has done everything, he is ready to do everything for me. Who can love me as much as he does? And I too love him, and am ready to do everything for him" . . .

"You are no longer asleep, then, dear Vérotchka?"

"My darling, why do you not have flowers in your room?"

"Very well, my friend, I will have some tomorrow; they are indeed very pleasant."

"What else do you want? Ah! buy yourself some photographs, or rather I will buy both flowers and photographs."

"Then they will be doubly agreeable to me. But, Vérotchka, you were pensive, you were thinking of your dream. Permit me to beg you to relate to me in greater detail this dream which so frightened you."

"I think no more about it: it is too painful to me to recall it."

"But perhaps, Vérotchka, it would be useful for me to know it."

"Very well, my dear friend."

And Vérotchka told her dream.

"Pardon me, my friend, if I ask you one more question: is that all you saw?"

"If it were not all, should I not have told you so, and besides did I not tell you so that very night?"

This was said so sincerely and simply that Lopoukhoff felt an ineffably sweet emotion, one of those intoxicating moments of happiness never to be forgotten.

What a pity that so few husbands can know this feeling! All the joys of happy love are as nothing compared with it; it fills the heart of man forever with the purest contentment and the holiest pride.

In Véra Pavlovna's words, spoken with a certain sadness, were conveyed a reproach, but the meaning of the reproach was: My friend, do you not know that you have deserved all my confidence? In the present state of their mutual relations a wife must conceal from her husband the secret movements of her heart, but from you, my dear friend, I have nothing to conceal; my heart is as open before you as before myself.

That is a very great reward for a husband, a reward purchased only by a high moral dignity; and whoever earns it has the right to consider himself an irreproachable man, to be sure that his confidence is pure and always will be, that valor and tranquillity will never desert him in whatever the situation in which he may find himself, and that destiny has almost no hold on the peace of his soul. We are well enough acquainted with Lopoukhoff to know that he is not sentimental, but he was so touched by these words of his wife that his face grew purple with emotion.

A VINDICATION OF NATURAL SOCIETY:

OR,

A VIEW OF THE MISERIES AND EVILS ARISING TO MANKIND FROM EVERY SPECIES OF ARTIFICIAL SOCIETY, IN A LETTER TO LORD ——.

BY EDMUND BURKE.

Continued from No. 58.

Before we finish our examination of artificial society, I shall lead your Lordship into a closer consideration of the relations which it gives birth to and the benefits, if such they are, which result from these relations. The most obvious division of society is into rich and poor, and it is no less obvious that the number of the former bear a great disproportion to those of the latter. The whole business of the poor is to administer to the idleness, folly, and luxury of the rich, and that of the rich, in return, is to find the best methods of confirming the slavery and increasing the burdens of the poor. In a state of nature it is an invariable law that a man's acquisitions are in proportion to his labors. In a state of artificial society it is a law as constant and as invariable that those who labor most enjoy the fewest things, and that those who labor not at all have the greatest number of enjoyments. A constitution of things this, strange and ridiculous beyond expression! We scarce believe a thing when we are told it which we actually see before our eyes every day without being in the least surprised. I suppose that there are in Great Britain upwards of an hundred thousand people employed in lead, tin, iron, copper, and coal mines; these unhappy wretches scarce ever see the light of the sun; they are buried in the bowels of the earth; there they work at a severe and dismal task, without the least prospect of being delivered from it; they subsist upon the coarsest and worst sort of fare; they have their health miserably impaired, and their lives cut short, by being perpetually confined in the close vapor of these malignant minerals. An hundred thousand more at least are tortured without remission by the suffocating smoke, intense fires, and constant drudgery necessary in refining and managing the products of those mines. If any man informed us that two hundred thousand innocent persons were condemned to so intolerable slavery, how should we pity the unhappy sufferers, and how great would be our just indignation against those who inflicted so cruel and ignominious a punishment! This is an instance—I could not wish a stronger—of the numberless things which we pass by in their common dress, yet which shock us when they are nakedly represented. But this number, considerable as it is, and the slavery, with all its baseness and horror, which we have at home, is nothing to what the rest of the world affords of the same nature. Millions are daily bathed in the poisonous damps and destructive effluvia of lead, silver, copper, and arsenic; to say nothing of those other employments, those stations of wretchedness and contempt, in which civil society has placed the numerous *enfants perdus* of her army. Would any rational man submit to one of the most tolerable of these drudgeries for all the artificial enjoyments which policy has made to result from them? By no means. And yet need I suggest to your Lordship that those who find the means, and those who arrive at the end, are not at all the same persons. On considering the strange and unaccountable fancies and contrivances of artificial reason, I have somewhere called this earth the Bedlam of our system. Looking now upon the effects of some of those fancies, may we not with equal reason call it likewise the Newgate and the Bridewell of the universe? Indeed, *the blindness of one part of mankind, co-operating with the frenzy and villainy of the other, has been the real builder of this respectable fabric of political society:* and as the blindness of mankind has caused their slavery, in return their state of slavery is made a pretence for continuing them in a state of blindness; for the politician will tell you gravely that their life of servitude disqualifies the greater part of the race of man for a search of truth, and supplies them with no other than mean and insufficient ideas. This is but true; *and this is one of the reasons for which I blame such institutions.*

In a misery of this sort, admitting some few lenitives, and those too but a few, nine parts in ten of the whole race of mankind drudge through life. It may be urged, perhaps, in palliation of this, that, at least, the rich few find a considerable and real benefit from the wretchedness of the many. But is this so in fact? Let us examine the point with a little more attention. For this purpose the rich in all societies may be thrown into two classes. The first is of those who are powerful as well as rich, and conduct the operations of the vast political machine. The other is of those who employ their riches wholly in the acquisition of pleasure. As to the first sort, their continual care and anxiety, their toilsome days and sleepless nights, are next to proverbial. These circumstances are sufficient almost to level their condition to that of the unhappy majority; but there are other circumstances which place them in a far lower condition. Not only their understandings labor continually, which is the severest labor; but their hearts are torn by the worst, most troublesome, and insatiable of all passions, by avarice, by ambition, by fear, and jealousy. No part of the mind has rest. Power gradually extirpates from the mind every human and gentle virtue. Pity, benevolence, friendship, are things almost unknown in high stations. *Veræ amicitiæ rarissimi inveniuntur in iis qui in honoribus reque publica versantur*, says Cicero. And, indeed, courts are the schools where cruelty, pride, dissimulation, and treachery are studied and taught in the most vicious perfection. This is a point so clear and acknowledged that if it did not make a necessary part of my subject, I should pass it by entirely. And this has hindered me from drawing at full length, and in the most striking colors, this shocking picture of the degeneracy and wretchedness of human nature in that part which is vulgarly thought its happiest and most amiable state. You know from what originals I could copy such pictures. Happy are they who know enough of them to know the little value of the possessors of such things, and of all that they possess; and happy they who have been snatched from that post of danger which they occupy, with the remains of their virtue; loss of honors, wealth, titles, and even the loss of one's country, is nothing in balance with so great an advantage.

Let us now view the other species of the rich, those who devote their time and fortunes to idleness and pleasure. How much happier are they? The pleasures which are agreeable to nature are within the reach of all, and therefore can form no distinction in favor of the rich. The pleasures which art forces up are seldom sincere and never satisfying. What is worse, this constant application to pleasure takes away from the enjoyment, or rather turns it into the nature of a very burdensome and laborious business. It has consequences much more fatal. It pro-

duces a weak valetudinary state of body, attended by all those horrid disorders, and yet more horrid methods of cure, which are the results of luxury on one hand and the weak and ridiculous efforts of human art on the other. The pleasures of such men are scarcely felt as pleasures; at the same time that they bring on pains and diseases, which are felt but too severely. The mind has its share of the misfortune; it grows lazy and enervate, unwilling and unable to search for truth, and utterly uncapable of knowing, much less of relishing, real happiness. *The poor by their excessive labor, and the rich by their enormous luxury, are set upon a level, and rendered equally ignorant of any knowledge which might conduce to their happiness.* A dismal view of the interior of all civil society! The lower part broken and ground down by the most cruel oppression; and the rich by their artificial method of life bringing worse evils on themselves than their tyranny could possibly inflict on those below them. Very different is the prospect of the natural state. Here there are no wants which nature gives (and in this state men can be sensible of no other wants) which are not to be supplied by a very moderate degree of labor; therefore there is no slavery. Neither is there any luxury, because no single man can supply the materials of it. Life is simple, and therefore it is happy.

I am conscious, my Lord, that your politician will urge in his defence that this unequal state is highly useful. That without dooming some part of mankind to extraordinary toil, the arts which cultivate life could not be exercised. But I demand of this politician, how such arts come to be necessary? He answers that civil society could not well exist without them. So that these arts are necessary to civil society, and civil society necessary again to these arts. *Thus are we running in a circle, without mod sty and without end, and making one error and extravagance an excuse for the other.* My sentiments about these arts and their cause, I have often discoursed with my friends at large. Pope has expressed them in good verse, where he talks with so much force of reason and elegance of language, in praise of the state of nature: —

> Then was not pride, nor art that pride to aid
> Man walked with beast, joint tenant of the shade.

On the whole, my Lord, *if political society, in whatever form, has still made the many the property of the few; if it has introduced labors unnecessary, vices and diseases unknown, and pleasures incompatible with nature; if in all countries it abridges the lives of millions, and renders those of millions more utterly abject and miserable; shall we still worship so destructive an idol, and daily sacrifice to it our health, our liberty, and our peace?* Or shall we pass by this monstrous heap of absurd notions and abominable practices, thinking we have sufficiently discharged our duty in exposing the trifling cheats and ridiculous juggles of a few mad, designing, or ambitious priests? Alas! my Lord, we labor under a mortal consumption, whilst we are so anxious about the cure of a sore finger. For has not this leviathan of civil power overflowed the earth with a deluge of blood, as if he were made to disport and play therein? We have shown that political society, on a moderate calculation, has been the means of murdering several times the number of inhabitants now upon the earth, during its short existence, not upwards of four thousand years in any accounts to be depended on. But we have said nothing of the other, and perhaps as bad, consequences of these wars, which have spilled such seas of blood and reduced so many millions to a merciless slavery. But these are only the ceremonies performed in the porch of the political temple. Much more horrid ones are seen as you enter it. The several species of governments vie with each other in the absurdity of their constitutions and the oppression which they make their subjects endure. Take them under what form you please, they are in effect but a despotism, and they fall, both in effect and appearance too, after a very short period, into that cruel and detestable species of tyranny; which I rather call it, because we have been educated under another form, than that this is of worse consequences to mankind. *For the free governments, for the point of their space, and the moment of their duration, have felt more confusion, and committed more flagrant acts of tyranny, than the most perfect despotic governments which we have ever known.* Turn your eye next to the labyrinth of the law, and the iniquity conceived in its intricate recesses. Consider the ravages committed in the bowels of all commonwealths by ambition, by avarice, envy, fraud, open injustice, and pretended friendship; vices which could draw little support from a state of nature, but which blossom and flourish in the rankness of political society. Revolve our whole discourse; add to it all those reflections which your own good understanding shall suggest, and make a strenuous effort beyond the reach of vulgar philosophy to confess that *the cause of artificial society is more defenceless even than that of artificial religion; that it is as derogatory from the honor of the Creator, as subversive of human reason, and productive of infinitely more mischief to the human race.*

If pretended revelations have caused wars where they were opposed, and slavery where they were received, the pretended wise inventions of politicians have done the same. But the slavery has been much heavier, the wars far more bloody, and both more universal by many degrees. *Show me any mischief produced by the madness or wickedness of theologians, and I will show you an hundred resulting from the ambition and villainy of conquerors and statesmen. Show me an absurdity in religion, and I will undertake to show you an hundred for one in political laws and institutions.* If you say that natural religion is a sufficient guide without the foreign aid of revelation, on what principle should political laws become necessary? Is not the same reason available in theology and in politics? If the laws of nature are the laws of God, is it consistent with the Divine wisdom to prescribe rules to us, and leave the enforcement of them to the folly of human institutions? Will you follow truth but to a certain point?

We are indebted for all our miseries to our distrust of that guide which Providence thought sufficient for our condition, — our own natural reason, which rejecting, both in human and Divine things, we have given our necks to the yoke of political and theological slavery. *We have renounced the prerogative of man, and it is no wonder that we should be treated like beasts.* But our misery is much greater than theirs, as the crime we commit in rejecting the lawful dominion of our reason is greater than any which they can commit. If, after all, you should confess all these things, yet plead the necessity of political institutions, weak and wicked as they are, I can argue with equal, perhaps superior, force, concerning the necessity of artificial religion; and every step you advance in your argument, you add a strength to mine. So that if we are resolved to submit our reason and our liberty to civil usurpation, we have nothing to do but to conform as quietly as we can to the vulgar notions which are connected with this, and take up the theology of the vulgar as well as their politics. But if we think this necessity rather imaginary than real, we should renounce their dreams of society, together with their visions of religion, and vindicate ourselves into perfect liberty.

You are, my Lord, but just entering into the world; I am going out of it. I have played long enough to be heartily tired of the drama. Whether I have acted my part in it well or ill, posterity will judge with more candor than I, or than the present age, with our present passions, can possibly pretend to. For my part, I quit it without a sigh, and submit to the sovereign order without murmuring. The nearer we approach to the goal of life, the better we begin to understand the true value of our existence and the real weight of our opinions. *We set out much in love with both; but we leave much behind us as we advance. We first throw away the tales along with the rattles of our nurses; those of the priest keep their hold a little longer; those of our governors the longest of all.* But the passions which prop these opinions are withdrawn one after another; and the cool light of reason, at the setting of our life, shows us what a false splendor played upon these objects during our more sanguine seasons. Happy, my Lord, if instructed by my experience, and even by my errors, you come early to make such an estimate of things as may give freedom and ease in your life. I am happy that such an estimate promises me comfort at my death.

[THE END.]

THEN AND NOW.

XIII.

OVER-PRODUCTION AND UNDER-CONSUMPTION.

BOSTON, February 28, 2085.

My Dear Louise:

I think that the following conversation between Mr. De Demain and myself may give you an idea of one very important change that Anarchy has wrought.

Said he: "A few weeks ago I was looking over an old scrap-book containing newspaper clippings, which have been handed down in my family for two hundred years. I chanced, in turning the leaves, to notice an editorial clipped from a paper called the 'New York Tribune' according to a foot note made in ink by my great-great-great, etc., grandfather. The editorial was entitled 'A Change of Phrase.'

"I suppose that the 'Tribune' in those days was considered one of the great papers, or my ancestor would not have clipped from it an article of this kind. After reading it, I did not wonder that the people of two hundred years ago could not see much good in Anarchy. If the writer of this article was a man of average intelligence, — and it is fair to suppose that an editorial writer for a great daily would be a man of at least average mental power, — it is not strange that humanity could not understand the goodness of a good thing."

"Mr. De Demain, I think that reflects on me," I was forced to say.

"I humbly beg your pardon," he replied, "if my remark seemed at all personal. Of course you have been with us long enough to understand that we are so far advanced that we look upon the people of two hundred years ago as barbarians. You certainly were regarded as a barbarian — a fair barbarian — when you made your strange advent among us. But you are not so considered now. Our advanced thought and manner of living have had a remarkable influence upon you. You are not yet, I know, in full sympathy with the teachings of Anarchy, but, as you think deeper, you certainly will be."

Louise, it really makes me tremble to think that, when I come back to live out my years among my old friends, I may be considered an Anarchist. Still, I think, if my mind does become impregnated with Anarchistic ideas while I am here, that I can easily kill them out by reading the daily papers when I return.

Mr. De Demain continued: "This brilliant editorial writer in the 'Tribune' says:

> During the last two years the stock phrase used in explaining business depression has been 'over-production.' The enemies of the American system have even gone so far as to assert that this is the chief evil of protection, since it unduly stimulates industrial activity and speedily overstocks the market with products that cannot be disposed of without ruinous delay and disturbance to trade. Over-production is the besetting weakness of the industrial world, no matter what the economic system or the tariff schedule may be. The evil will last to the end of time, and there can never be any hope of obviating it, since the requirements of mankind will invariably be over-estimated by the industries of the world. People grow weary of stock phrases. Why not talk about under-consumption during the next twelve months? It will mean about the same thing, but it will be fresh and new, and will possibly have a more cheerful sound. It may be that a vigorous impulse will be given to the workaday American world, if it can be convinced that the hard times merely indicate the wholesome restraints of under-consumption.

"I have simply to quote facts to you to prove that the young man who wrote the above was a false prophet. We have not reached the end of time, and over production is not an evil, and we do not obviate it by juggling with words and calling it under-consumption."

"Do you mean to say," I asked, "that it is possible at all times and under all conditions to exactly estimate the quantity of everything the people will want for a given length of time? or that the supply is always kept below the demand?"

"I mean that without the intervention of the State supply and demand are so nicely balanced that what was once called over-production is never an evil. It was not Malthus who first discovered the fact that the increase of humanity is held in check by the wants of humanity. This fact was realized several thousand years before Malthus was born. Two hundred years ago your political economists and social reformers in the same breath spoke of over-production of the necessaries of life and told the laborers that they should have smaller families. Was it not the voice of ignorant barbarians who told the laborers that they were producing too much food and clothing and at the same time that they were producing too many stomachs for the food and too many bodies for the clothing?

"The trouble was that the State stood in the way of a rapid and equal distribution of the products of the world. There never was a time when the earth produced too much wheat, too many potatoes, too much Indian corn. There never was a time when there was an over-supply of good beef and mutton. There never were too many well-fitting, long-wearing boots and shoes. There never was too much warm, clean, strong, attractive clothing in the world. I will not say that such a time may never come, because I do not care to be called in the future a false prophet. But in the past where has been the over-production? There has been often under-consumption, but it was not merely a change of phrase! Over-production, if such could ever occur, would mean immense wealth; under-consumption means poverty. Any blockhead — even a barbarian blockhead — ought to know the difference."

I don't relish being called a barbarian, and seeing that Mr. De Demain was growing excited, I thought it better to draw his little lecture to a close, fearing that he might in his enthusiasm unintentionally say something unpleasant. I suppose I was very wicked, but I did wish that Mr. De Demain could have had Senator Hoar for a disputant, and that I could have been a listener. I would have been willing to share any unpleasant remarks about barbarians, etc., with our honorable senator.

JOSEPHINE.

Open Letter to William M. Salter.

Your "Success and Failure of Protestantism" is so virile an article that I forbear to inflict upon you the indignity (as it has come to be) of *Reverend*. I feel, as after a good Christmas dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, that it has "gone to the spot." The modern world has been beggared by the divorce of those realities of which State and Church are the false representatives, and your conception of ethical culture is precisely what is needed, as far as doctrine goes, to reintegrate them. Just as every tithe paid to the clergy impoverished the laborer, so every sentiment wasted upon abstract divinity impoverishes society. Your historical citations of the demands of the German peasants, at first supported by Luther before the nobles, then deserted and condemned by him when they had passed from praying to fighting for their rights, is, as you have well understood, an image, a logical consequence, and an impeachment of the desertion of humanity by divinity, the perfidy of abstractions.

Principles, not beings; Truth and Love, not gods or men, are fit to be worshipped, and not by words or ceremonial, but in the practice of life. This you feel and you declare.

Now, my cordial thanks for the message of your thought would be less than sincere did they stop here. I challenge and reproach one inconsistent phrase, — the spread-eagleism of "*this magnificent republic might still have been a British province.*" For it is not meet that the same pen which in the past sides with the oppressed peasantry of a foreign nation against their exploiters should pay ignoble homage to a government the catspaw of privilege, the tool, the hired servant, the shyster of the Vanderbilts and Goulds and Huntingdons, the robbers of the people's soil and filchers of their produce.

EDGEWORTH.

GUNTERSVILLE, ALABAMA, December 20, 1884.

EXTRACT FROM MR. SALTER'S PAMPHLET.

Yes, Protestantism in the person of Luther cast the weight of its influence against the era of social righteousness, on which the hearts of the poor oppressed German peasants were set. It must suffice today to refer to this single instance of Protestant faithlessness. The German peasant wanted freedom, he wanted ecclesiastical and political freedom. The church and the feudal lord united in despoiling him. He had no rights worth mentioning against either. He was bound to the soil, was obliged to render any service the lord called for, and had lost his right to the old common woods and forests and fishing grounds and pastures. And to the church he paid not only tithes, the tenth part of all his corn, grass, colts, calves, lambs, pigs, geese, and chickens, and even every tenth egg, but he paid money for every particular service he got from the church. A Catholic writer of that period, brother to the secretary of the Emperor Charles V., says: "We can hardly get anything from Christian ministers without money; at baptism, money; at bishoping, money; at marriage, money; for confession, money, — no, not extreme unction without money. They will ring no bells without money, no burial in the church without money; so that it seemeth that Paradise is shut upon them that have no money. . . . . The rich men may readily get indulgences, but the poor none, because he wanteth money to pay for them." No wonder the peasants were rising up against such a double tyranny. They drew up twelve articles in which they stated their demands:

(1) The right to choose their own pastors. (2) They would pay tithe of corn, but small tithes, as every tenth calf or pig or egg, they would not pay. (3) They would be free and no longer serfs and bondmen. (4) Wild game and fish to be free to all. (5) Woods and forests to belong to all for fuel. (6) No services of labor to be more than were required of their forefathers. (7) If more service required, wages must be paid for it. (8) Rent, when above the value of the land, to be properly valued and lowered. (9) Punishments for crime to be fixed. (10) Common land to be again given up to common use. (11) Death gifts (*i. e.*, the right of the lord to take the best chattel of the deceased tenant) to be done away with. (12) Any of these articles proved to be contrary to the Scriptures or God's justice to be null and void.

What a chance in view of this for a religion that meant to be of any use in this world, that meant to vindicate the right and put down the wrong, to assert itself! By this time many of the princes had become Protestant. Did their Protestantism mean any increased sense of social justice? What did Luther himself say? He was not indeed without sympathy for the peasants. He was too much of a man, to say nothing of Christian, for that. And he did not fail, as a valiant man, to give the princes his opinion of them. Even before the articles were published, he said: — "The common man, tried beyond all endurance, overwhelmed with intolerable burdens, will not and cannot any longer tamely submit, and he has doubtless good reasons for striking with the flail and the club, as he threatens to do." Again, of the articles, he says to the princes that some of them "contain demands so obviously just that the mere circumstance of their requiring to be brought forward dishonors you before God and man." And he reminds them that "government was not instituted for its own ends, nor to make use of the persons subject to it for the accomplishment of its own caprices and evil passions, but for the interests and advantage of the people. Now the people have become fully impressed with this fact, and will no longer tolerate your shameful extortions. Of what benefit were it to a peasant that his field should produce so many florins as it does grains of corn, if his master may despoil him of the produce, and lavish, like dirt, the money he has thus derived from his vassal, in fine clothes, fine castles, fine eating and drinking?"

But when the princes refused to yield to his exhortations, when the peasants began to make good their words by their deeds, when they threatened to rise in revolt, Luther himself yielded and practically went over to the other side.

It is not a pleasant task to quote Luther's language against the peasants, after they were once fairly started on their violent career. It is not the man but the churchman who speaks. His theory was, "Christians must suffer rather than take up arms," they must bear the cross, — "that is a Christian's right," he said, "he has no other." He spoke of Christians as flocks of sheep, not to be tended but to be slaughtered one after the other. "*Nicht Weideschaf — Schlachtschaf! nur so hin; eins nach dem anderen!*" If they rebelled against the civil power, there was but one fate for them. As to the "murderous and robbing hordes of peasants," as he styled them, he said to the princes: — "Let them be destroyed, strangled, stabbed, secretly or publicly, by whomsoever is able to do it, even as a mad dog is killed, right away." I do not believe that this was all due to cowardice and a desire to side with princely authority, — though these motives may have partly operated with Luther; as he did not fail to command clemency at the end of the war, so during its continuance he did not cease to speak of the "mad tyranny" of princes and lords. In my judgment, it was not Luther merely that failed at this critical moment, it was not merely Protestantism that failed; it was Christianity, and its impracticable, unphilosophical, and untrue doctrine of non-resistance. It was the Christian doctrine that we are not to take justice into our own hands, but must leave it to another, that was answerable for the horrors of the peasants' war. Luther had said this and quoted scripture passages to this effect from the very start. There was not so much a change in his view or his sympathies as in the circumstances to which his view could apply. He said from the beginning such things as these: — to revolt is to act like heathen; the duty of the Christian is to be patient, not to fight; defensive justice is for God alone; no one can be his own judge; an attempt to be is something which God cannot endure; it is against God and God is against it. Such a view is to us mythological; but to Luther, following closely after the teaching of his master, it was sober truth. But if Luther had been more of a heathen, he would have stood before the world a truer man. Not on the basis of such a view has progress been made in the world. Had Christianity been the rule of life for intelligent Frenchmen a hundred years ago, there would have been no French revolution. Had the thought that paralyzed the arm of Luther been the conviction of our forefathers in 1776, this magnificent republic might still have been a British province. Progress is with those who know that justice is to be done by them, who would not honor themselves, did they not defend themselves against those who outrage their rights. I do not answer for all that the peasants did; many of them were as fanatical as Luther, and they were as little disposed to mercy as Luther charged the nobles to be to them. But this is not the question. Were they not right in their claims at the outset?

Another Apology Now in Order.

[Lowell Bell.]

Dastardly attempt to assassinate Lieut. Gov. at Toronto. Box of lamp-black found in the yard. U. S. Senate should apologize.

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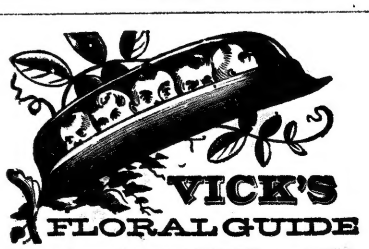

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